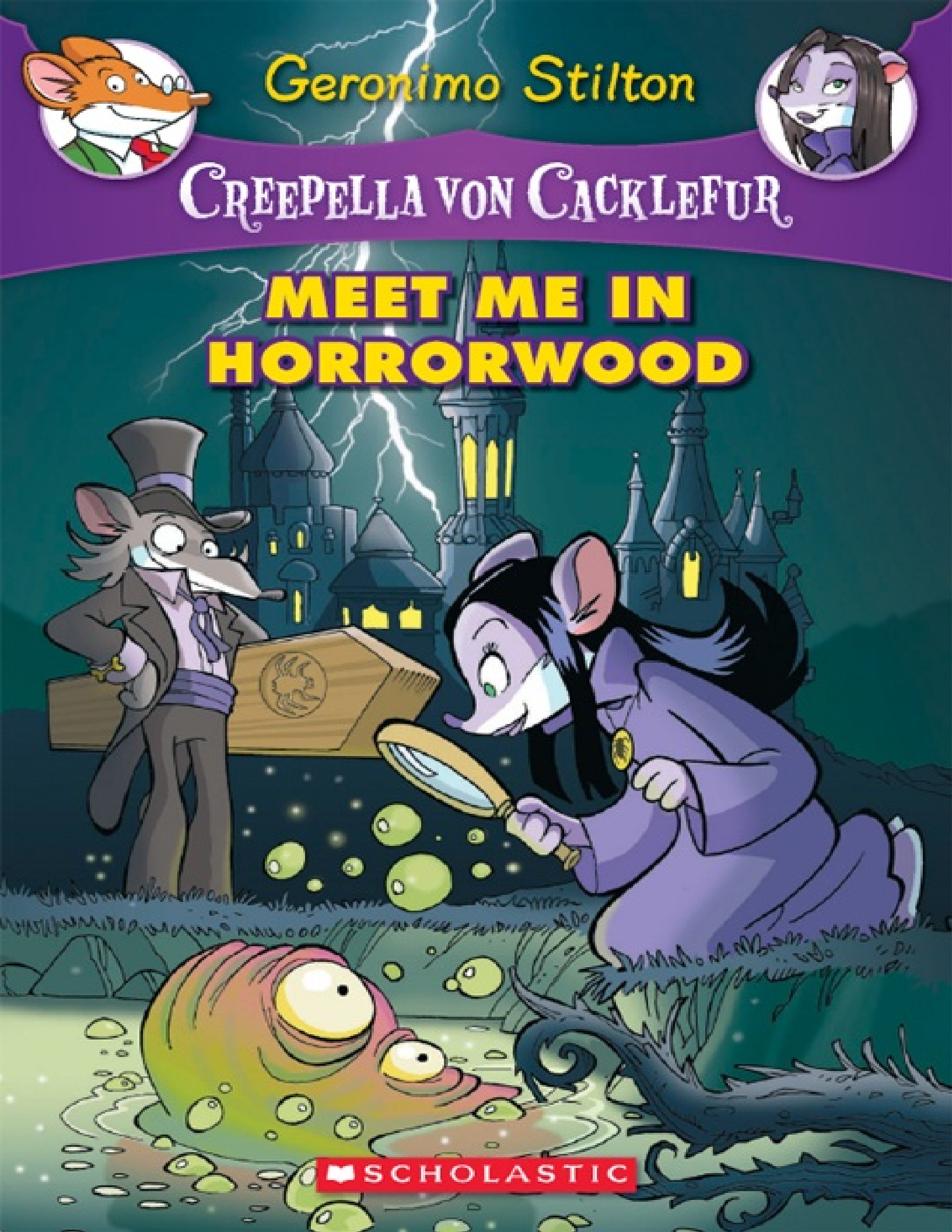
Geronimo Stilton
Creepella von Cacklefur
MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD
SCHOLASTIC

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**. Creepella lives in a **CEMETERY**, sleeps in a marble **sarcophagus**, and drives a **hearse**. By night she is a special effects and set designer for **SCARY FILMS**, and by day she's studying to become a **journalist**! Her father, Boris von Cacklefur, runs the funeral home **Fabumouse Funerals**, and the von Cacklefur family owns the **CREEPY** Cacklefur Castle, which sits on top of a skull-shaped mountain in **MYSTERIOUS VALLEY**.

YIKES! I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think Creepella and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read this **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **SPECTACULARLY SPOOKY** tale!

Geronimo Stilton

Creepella von Cacklefur
Bitewing
Billy Squeakspeare
Grandpa Frankenstein
A journalist who lives in Mysterious Valley and solves spooky cases with her inseparable pet bat, Bitewing.
A famous writer and friend of Creepella.
An extremely mad scientist and an expert in Egyptian mummies.
Snip and Snap
Shivereen
Grandma Crypt
Troublemaking twins and expert spies.
Dolores
Kafka
Creepella's favorite niece.
She loves spiders, and her pet is a gigantic tarantula named Dolores.
The von Cacklefur family's pet cockroach.

Booey the Poltergeist
The mischievous ghost who haunts Cacklefur Castle.
Boneham
The butler to the von Cacklefur family, and a snob right down to the tips of his whiskers.
Baby
He was adopted and raised with love by the von Cacklefurs.
Madame LaTomb
The family housekeeper. A ferocious were-canary nests in her hair.
Chef Stewrat
The cook at Cacklefur Castle. He dreams of creating the ultimate stew.
Boris von Cacklefur
Creepella's father, and the funeral director at Fabumouse Funerals.
Chompers
The von Cacklefur family's meat-eating guard plant.

Geronimo Stilton

CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD

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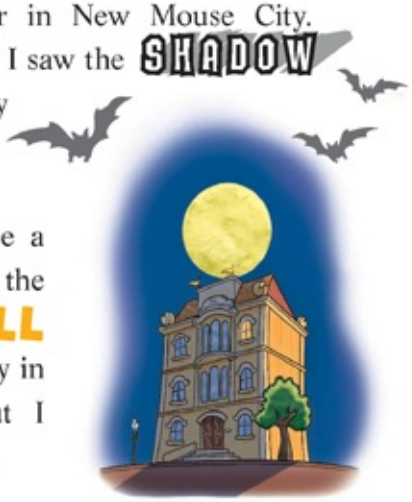
A Shadow in the Night . . .

It was almost midnight. I was working late in my office at *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famouse newspaper in New Mouse City. Suddenly, I thought I saw the SHADOW of a bat outside my window.

WEIRD!

Could it really be a bat? I looked out of the window. A FULL moon shone brightly in the black sky. But I didn't see any bats.



Oh, I'm sorry! I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I'm the editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*. I turned back to my computer, but I felt strange, as if somebody was staring at me. **WEIRD!**

I headed to the office kitchen. A nice **CUP** of hot cheddar tea was just what I needed to calm down.

A shiver ran down my back, **curling** my whiskers. I couldn't shake that creepy feeling. So I turned off the light and headed home.

As I walked, I had the **ODD** feeling that someone was following me. I walked faster and faster. Finally, I reached the front door of my house. I ***quickly*** went inside and locked the door behind me. Then I breathed a sigh of relief.

I was just putting on my apron when a chilly breeze hit my whiskers. The window was wide open. WEIRD! I was sure I had closed it that morning. As I moved to shut it, I thought I heard the rustling of wings outside.

Zoom! Something zipped right past me! I felt it brush against my whiskers. Then something heavy landed right on my tail! I let out a bloodcurdling scream:

A large package wrapped in purple paper bounced off of my tail and landed on the floor. Then a tiny voice yelled in my ear:

"Message for you!
Message for you!
Message for you!"

I recognized that voice. It was **Bitewing**, Creepella von Cacklefur's pet bat!

I rubbed my bruised tail.

"Open the box! It's for you!" the purple bat screeched.

I tore off the purple paper and opened the box. The first thing I saw was a card shaped like a **TOMBSTONE**! There were two hearts on the front of the tombstone, with the initials *G* and *B* underneath. **WEIRD!**

Underneath the tombstone were a computer disc and a letter written on purple paper.

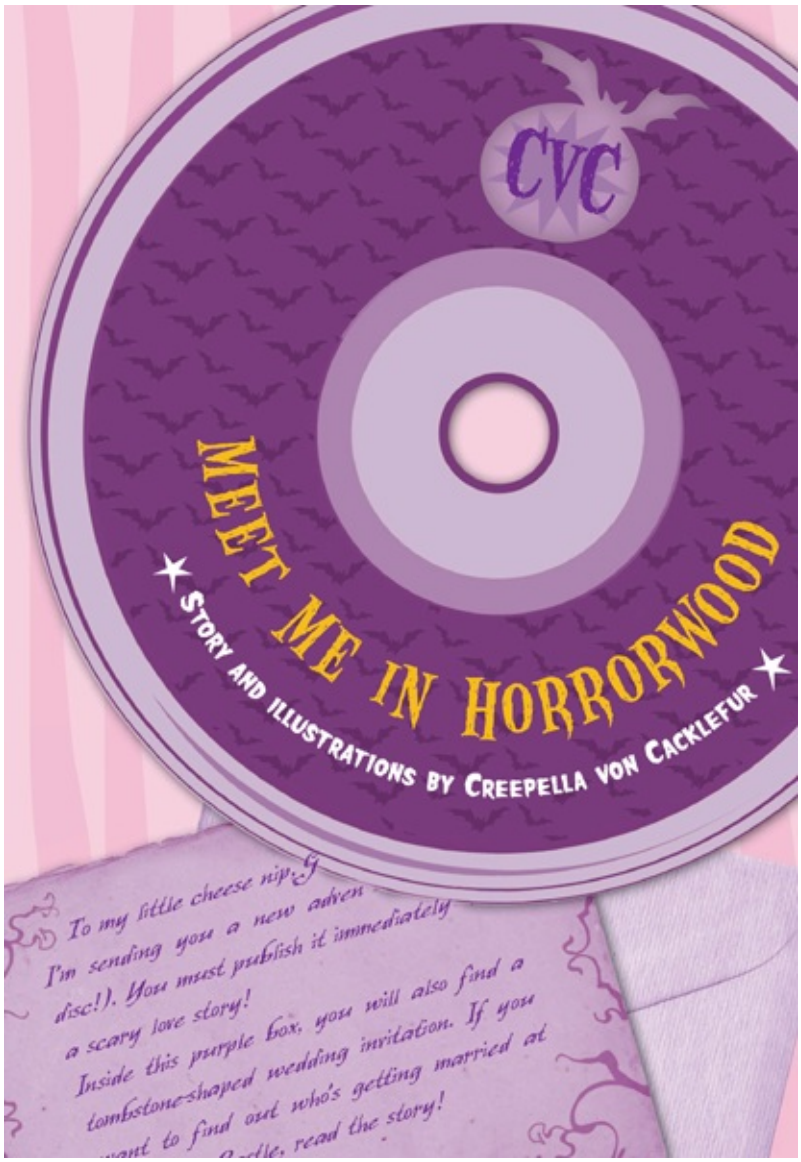
The label on the disc said *Meet Me in Horrorwood*. The letter read:

To my little cheese nip, Geronimo,

I'm sending you a new adventure (on the disc!). You must publish it immediately! It's a scary love story!

Inside this purple box, you will also find a tombstone-shaped wedding invitation. If you want to find out who's getting married at Cacklefur Castle, read the story!

I was so curious, I began to read it right away. . . .


CVC
MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD
STORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR
To my little cheese nip,
I'm sending you a new alien
disc!). You must publish it immediately
a scary love story!
Inside this purple box, you will also find a
tombstone-shaped wedding invitation. If you
want to find out who's getting married at
read the story!

"Auntie?"

Creepella von Cacklefur slowly opened her eyes. Someone was tugging on her blanket.

"Auntie, wake up! We've got a problem!"

Creepella propped herself up on her pillows and YAWNED. Her niece, Shivereen, was standing by the bed next to her. She looked very worried.

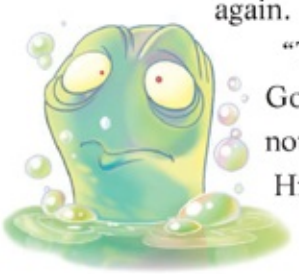
Kafka, the von Cacklefur family's pet cockroach, slept at the foot of Creepella's bed. He slowly opened his beady eyes. Then he wiggled his antennae to greet Shivereen.

Yawn . . .
Auntie?

Creepella saw the first rays of the sun rising in the GLOOMY sky. Cacklefur Castle was as quiet as a tomb.

She felt very sleepy. Last night, a magnificent full moon shone in the sky. It had inspired her to write an article about **werewolves** for *The Shivery News*. Being published in the most famouse newspaper in Mysterious Valley was a great achievement. Creepella had worked late into the night, and now she didn't feel like waking up. But Shivereen looked like she had something **important** to say.

"What's wrong?" Creepella asked, yawning again.



"There's something wrong with Gorgo!" Shivereen cried. "He's not stinking like he always does. His GREEN SLIME coloring has faded. And he won't eat!"

Mr. M.'s Monster Catalog

GORGO

Cacklefur Castle's moat monster

Birthplace: A stinky swamp that's impossible to find

Age: Between 15 and 150 monster years

Size: Always changing

Favorite Food: Eats everything, but prefers rotten food with vintage rust

Favorite Color: Slime green

Favorite Perfume: Essence of Smelly Socks

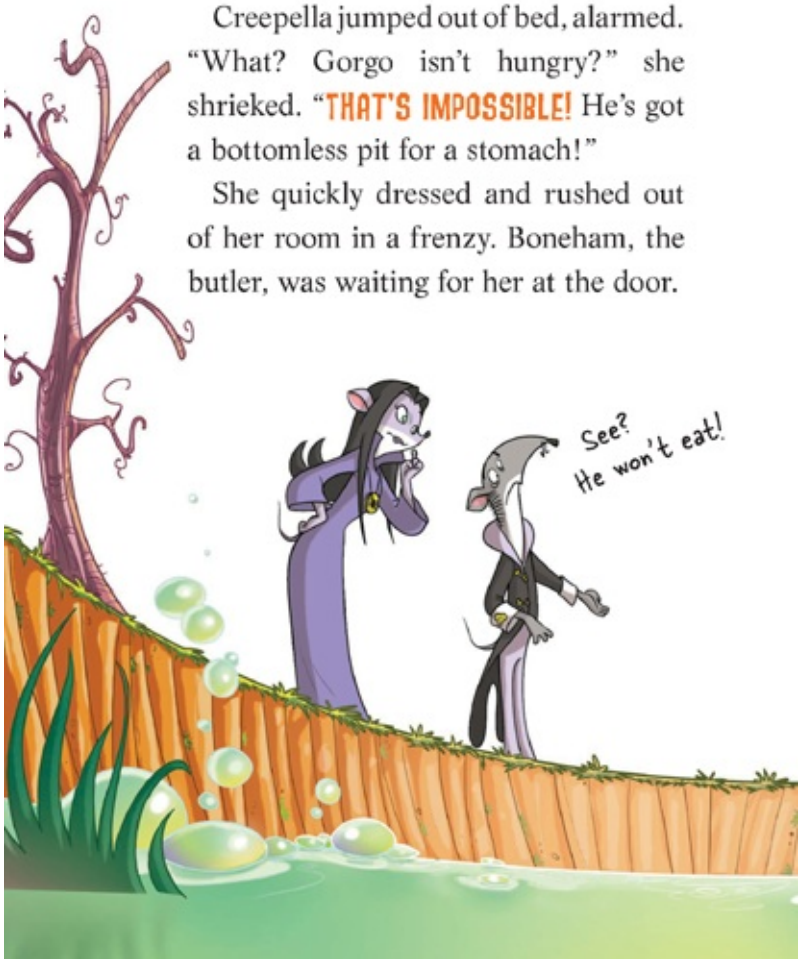
Favorite Book: *Green Eggs and Hammers*

Identifying Marks: Green boils all over his body

It appears there may be only one other creature of this type in the entire world — a female monster.

Creepella jumped out of bed, alarmed. "What? Gorgo isn't hungry?" she shrieked. "**THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!** He's got a bottomless pit for a stomach!"

She quickly dressed and rushed out of her room in a frenzy. Boneham, the butler, was waiting for her at the door.



"Miss Creepella, the situation is serious," he said. "Please **FOLLOW ME**!"

They quickly reached the moat, where the monster lived. Boneham threw a rusty old bicycle into the **muddy** water. Bicycles were one of Gorgo's favorite foods.

"Bluuuuuuuuurp!"

Gorgo let out a lonely cry. He didn't even look at the bicycle.

"See? He hasn't eaten anything since yesterday," Boneham said sadly. "All he does is cry out with heartbreaking **bluuuuuuuurps**!"

Creepella shook her head, worried. "I've never seen him like this," she agreed. "Did you try throwing him an old, **DISGUSTING**, smelly shoe?"

Boneham nodded. "I did. He didn't even notice it. It's still **floating** down there!"

"This is serious," Creepella said. "What if we try a box of delicious **Rusty** nails?"

"I already did," the butler replied. "He didn't touch one!"

Creepella frowned. "This is *very* serious. How about a nice bag of **ROTTEN** garbage? I'm sure he could never resist that!"

The butler sighed. "No. He wouldn't even taste it!"

"This is very, very, very serious," Creepella said thoughtfully. "There's only one solution."

"You're not thinking —"

"I am!" Creepella cried. "We need a family reunion!"

The butler turned PALE. "Please think this through, Miss Creepella," he said. "Remember the last reunion? It was so LIVELY, we had to rebuild an entire wing of the castle!"

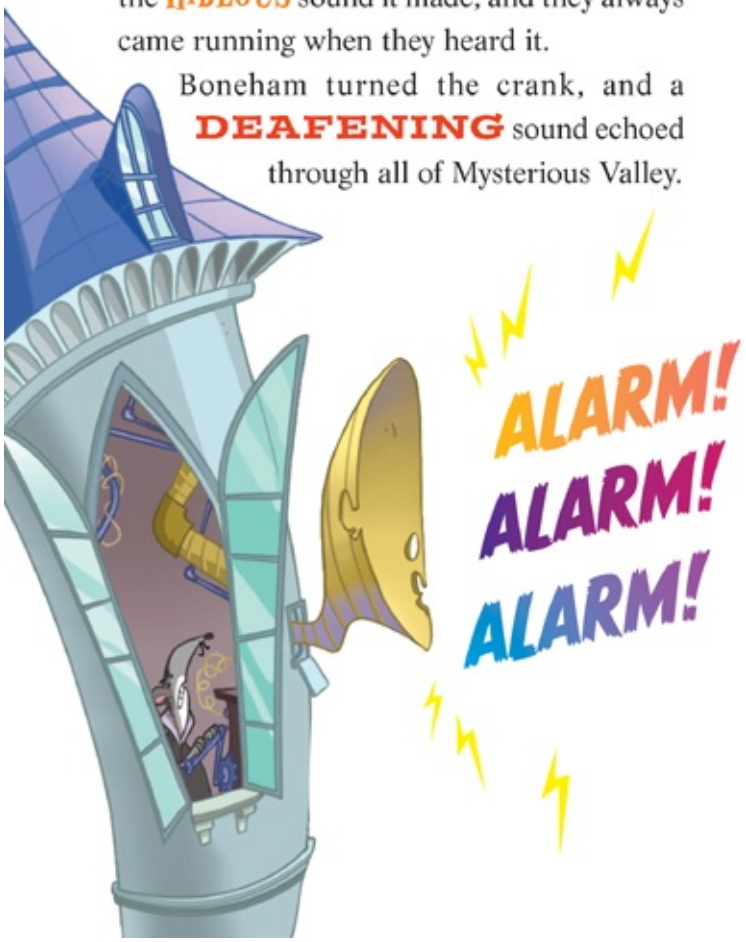
Creepella's green eyes sparkled. "That was a FUN party! But there won't be any fun this time. We have a very serious problem to solve. Gorgo is SICK!"

The butler ran up the **STAIRS** to the top of the tallest tower in Cacklefur Castle, **Bitewing's tower**. Grandpa Frankenstein's inventions were piled high in the small room. He created them all when he was a young mouse learning his trade at the Weird Wizard Shop.

Boneham went into the gloomy room and walked over to a large **MACHINE** covered by a heavy cloth. He pulled the **MOLDY** cloth aside to reveal a strange contraption, the **Cacklefur Emergency Alarm**. Everyone in the von Cacklefur family knew

the HIDEOUS sound it made, and they always came running when they heard it.

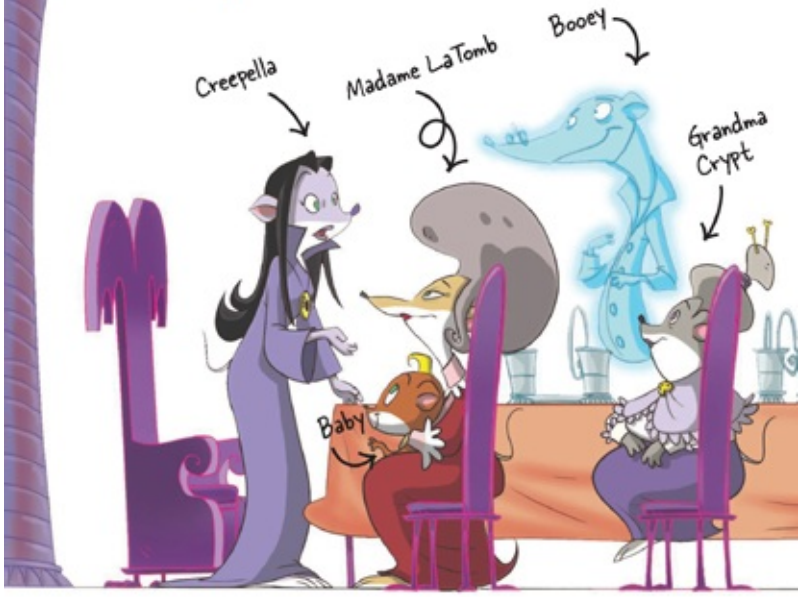
Boneham turned the crank, and a DEAFENING sound echoed through all of Mysterious Valley.



One by one, each member of the von Cacklefur family gathered in the BANQUET HALL.

"Welcome!" Creepella told the group. Her voice was serious. "I have assembled you here because we have a problem."

"Gorgo is sick!" Shivereen exclaimed.



The family members exchanged worried and confused glances.

"Sick? What are his **symptoms**?" asked Madame LaTomb, the family housekeeper.

"His color is sickly . . . it's not as bright as his usual **SLIME GREEN**," Creepella began.

"Well, it's delightfully FOGGY outside," said Creepella's father, Boris von Cacklefur. "It's normal to have pale coloring in this weather."

"Maybe, but there's something else," Creepella went on. "He makes a very sad noise. It's an odd 'bluuuuuuurp' that brings TEARS to my eyes."

Howler, the were-canary, peeked out of Madame LaTomb's puffy hair.

"Bah! So much worry about nothing!" the man-eating bird chirped. "He's probably just got an upset stomach."

"Impossible!" Shivereen told him. "He's eaten nothing since yesterday!"

"Good gravy!" exclaimed Chef Stewrat. "Not even my stew?"

Creepella shook her head.

The banquet hall got very quiet. Everyone was very worried about Gorgo.

Then a **LOUD** voice rang out. "Hmm. Pale color . . . a **sad** cry . . . no appetite . . . but of course! The symptoms are clear!"

The voice belonged to Grandma Crypt. She jumped up on her chair.

"I know what's the matter with Gorgo!"

Every creature in the hall looked at her — even **KAFKA**, the pet cockroach, and **CHOMPERS**, the meat-eating plant.

"It's just like the main character of the last book I read, *Without You My Heart Molds*, written by Billy Squeakspeare," Grandma Crypt announced. "Gorgo is in **love**!"

"Gorgo is in love?" everyone asked at once. "In love with whom?"

Grandma Crypt shrugged. "I have no idea."

"**We do! We do!**" chanted Snip and Snap, the troublemaking twins. "If we tell you, can we get a second serving of stew cake?"

Creepella scowled at her nephews. "Cake? Gorgo is **SICK** and the only thing you can think of is cake? You'd better tell us what you know right now!"

Snip took a **POSTCARD** from Snap's pocket and handed it to Creepella.

"Here, we found it on the bank of the moat," Snip said.

Mr. M.'s Monster Catalog

BLOBBINA

Female monster and Horrorwood film actress

Education: Swamp School of Drama

Age: A lady never reveals her age!

Size: Big, but perfect for a slime monster

Favorite Food: Wilted flowers

Favorite Color: Pale pink

Favorite Perfume: Moldy Violets

Favorite Book: *Heart of Mud* by Billy Squeakspeare

Identifying Marks: A dark purple mole by her mouth

It appears there may be only one other creature of this type in the entire world — a male monster.

"Gorgo really is in love!" Boris von Cacklefur exclaimed happily.

"And she's a **movie star**!" added Grandpa Frankenstein.

Madame LaTomb sighed. "It's so romantic. As a young girl, I, too, was in love with a famouse movie star. **Humphrey Bograt** was so handsome!"

The crabby canary snorted. "**LOVE!** What a waste of time."

"Look who's talking," Creepella said, **POINTING** at Howler's beak. "Did you forget how you fell head over wings for that saucy parakeet last year?"

The canary **blushed** and dove into the thickest part of Madame LaTomb's hair.

Booey the ghost had a faraway look on his see-through face. "One can never forget

love," he said. "It's almost better than an old RUINED castle."

"Yes, better than a velvet-covered CASKET," added Boris.

"Or a great big pot of ten-year-old STEW," Chef Stewrat said dreamily.

Creepella turned to Grandpa Frankenstein. "What about you, Grandfather?" she asked him. "Have you ever been LOVESICK like Gorgo?"

"Yes, my dear," he replied. "Once, a lovely MUMMY broke my heart. But then I met Grandma Crypt, and the rest is history."

The entire hall filled with deep sighs.

Everyone started talking at once. They all wanted to help Gorgo win the **love** of his dreams.

Grandma Crypt was the family's best expert on love stories and remedies for **broken hearts**. "He needs to write her a nice love **LETTER**," she decided.

"Gorgo is too **shy** to write to her," Boris pointed out. He looked right at his daughter. "My dear Creepella, can you help him?"

"***I'm on it!***" she replied. "I'm going straight to my room to write the letter."

Secret stash of snacks (to improve concentration)
Lizard screen licker (to keep monitor clean)
Tarantula paperweight
Beetle pencil sharpener
Snail with white slime (to cover up mistakes)
Earthworm rubber bands

Creepella sat at her desk, picked up her tarantula paperweight, and took out a sheet of yellowed paper. Then she chose a pencil with a bright violet tip. Her beetle nibbled on the tip until it was nice and SHARP.

"Now I can begin!" she exclaimed. "Hmm. How does one address a monster movie star?"

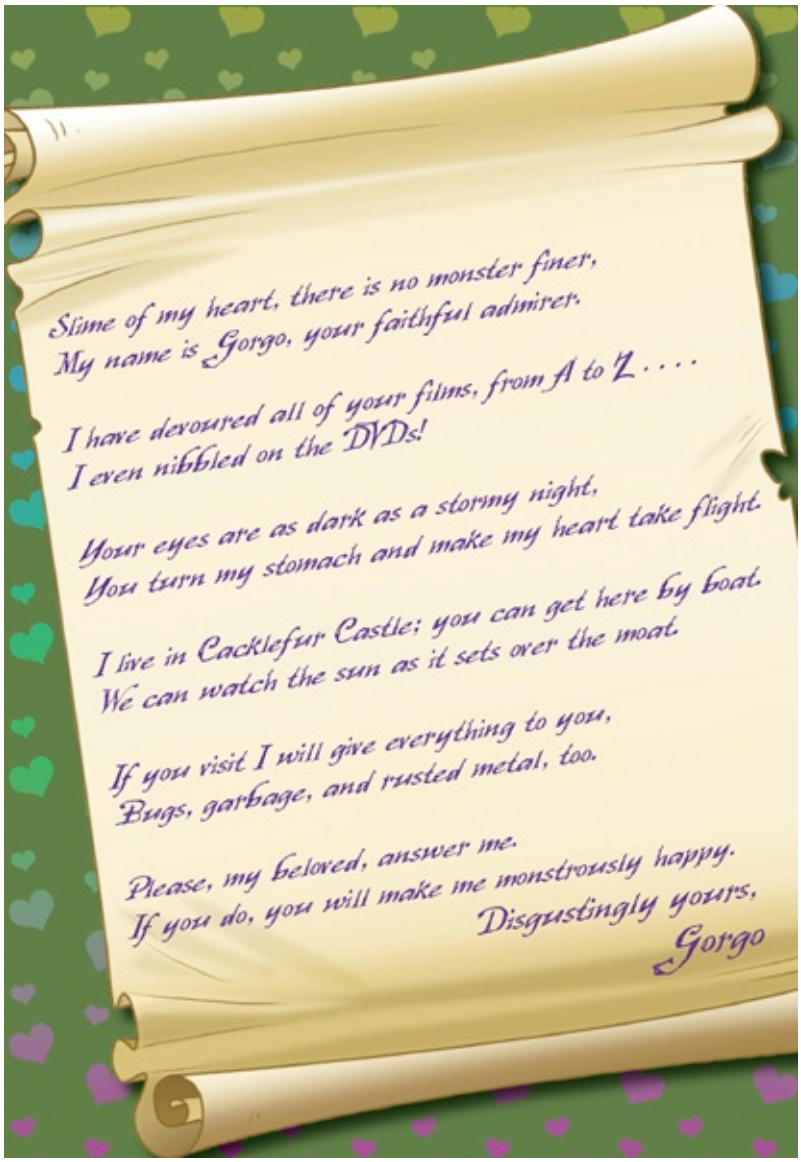
"Dear Sliminess . . ." NO.

"TO A MARVELOUS MASS OF MUD . . ." NO, NO.

"SMELLIEST LEADING ACTRESS . . ." NO, NO, NO.

Creepella shook her head. She crumpled up the third piece of wasted paper and threw it in the cauldron-shaped recycling bin.

"I've got it!" she shouted, and she began to write. . . .


Slime of my heart, there is no monster finer,
My name is Gorgo, your faithful admirer.
I have devoured all of your films, from A to Z . . . .
I even nibbled on the DVDs!
Your eyes are as dark as a stormy night,
You turn my stomach and make my heart take flight.
I live in Cacklefur Castle; you can get here by boat.
We can watch the sun as it sets over the moat.
If you visit I will give everything to you,
Bugs, garbage, and rusted metal, too.
Please, my beloved, answer me.
If you do, you will make me monstrously happy.
Disgustingly yours,
Gorgo

Bitewing flapped his wings.

"Are you done yet?
Are you done yet?
Are you done yet?"

he screeched.

"Yes! I've written a monstrously romantic letter," Creepella replied. She handed him the sheet of paper. "You have to take this to Blobbina at Horrorwood Studios!"

"But the set is **SOOOOO** far," the bat complained. "It's a long, tiring flight."

Creepella opened a drawer and pulled out a box of chocolates.

Bitewing's eyes got wide. He smacked his lips.

"Are those chocolate-covered ants?" he cried. "My favorite!"

"They're all yours!" Creepella told him.

She threw some of the chocolate bugs in the air. Bitewing SWOOPED and SOARED, quickly catching each one in his mouth. Now he had the energy he needed for the long trip. He gripped the letter between his TEETH and flew out of the window.

Creepella started to work on another newspaper article. When she stopped to look at the clock, she saw that a few hours had passed.

"STRANGE! Bitewing isn't back yet," she said with a frown. "And it's time for his favorite TV show, SO YOU THINK YOU CAN FLY? He never misses that. I must find him!"

Creepella jumped into her super-deluxe hearse and headed for the film studios in Horrorwood.

The famouse director Sam Shivers was directing his new **HORROR** movie: a terrifying monster story starring Blobbina. The gossip columns were already saying that her role in *Shrieks and Monsters* could win Blobbina a **GOLDEN CLAW** award for

in a Horror Film.

"Bitewing!" Creepella called out. Then she muttered to herself, "Where could he have gone?"

Rodents of all shapes and colors were scurrying around the set. Actors practiced their lines. Nervous technicians moved lights and wires. Costume makers HURRIED by with armloads of material. Stagehands carried props from place to place.

Suddenly, Creepella heard a deep voice behind her.

"Your eyes are as BEAUTIFUL as swamp pearls."

Creepella turned, but she couldn't tell which mouse had spoken. Even so, she batted her lashes.

"Thank you," she replied sweetly. "It must be my eye shadow made of ground beetle shell."

Hello!
I'm on the set!
Oops! Now what?

Ha–ha!
Where is Bitewing?
Watch where you're going!
That looks great!
Faster. We're late!

"Your hair is as shiny as swamp snakes," the mysterious rodent continued.

Creepella giggled. "It must be my shampoo: SUPER SLUG SLIME."

She moved toward a huge panel on the set. The voice sounded like it was coming from there.

"And your blond fur is as bright as the full moon!" the rodent exclaimed.

Creepella stopped. "Wait. My fur isn't blond!"

She peeked behind the panel and saw that her admirer was actually an actor, practicing his LINES for a romantic scene. He looked at her, confused.

"May I help you?" he asked.

"Ah, no . . . I mean, yes!" she said. "Have you seen a little purple BAT around here?"

The actor nodded. "I think I saw one in the special effects warehouse next door."

She went to the warehouse and walked inside. It was completely dark.

"Crusty cobwebs! I can't see a thing!" Creepella complained. "I'll just turn on this light switch."

Creepella found a lot of things in the warehouse:

a GHOST costume,

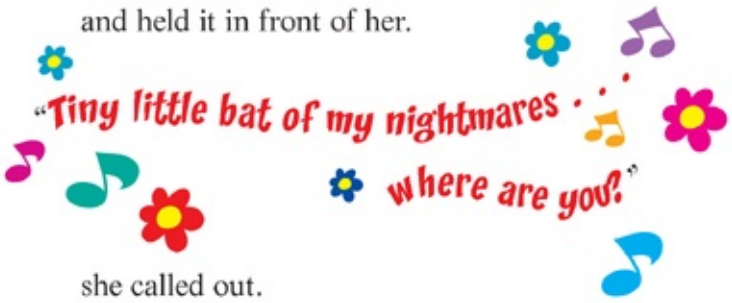
a pair of werewolf **gloves**,

a set of razor-sharp canine teeth,

and a wild cat mask with tangled whiskers.

But she couldn't find Bitewing!

"I know what to do," she said. She took a little jar of mosquito jam from her pocket and held it in front of her.



she called out.

Soon she heard a fluttering of wings and Bitewing's cry.

"Hiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!"

"Finally! There you are," Creepella exclaimed. "Did you deliver the letter?"

Bitewing slurped down his delicious snack. "**Yum, yum, yum**," he said happily. "Well . . . I've been *flying* all over the place, but I can't find Blobbina. Nobody seems to know where she is!"

"Hmm," Creepella said thoughtfully. "It seems I have a new MYSTERY on my paws." She briskly walked out of the warehouse. "Follow me," she told Bitewing. "Maybe the director can give us a CLUE!"

They found Sam Shivers inside his trailer, drinking a glass of swamp juice. He was staring sadly at a poster of Blobbina on the wall.

Creepella stuck her head through the open doorway. "May I come in?"

Shivers didn't answer. Instead, he sighed and wiped a tear from his furry cheek with his handkerchief.

Bitewing flew into the trailer and circled the director's head. "*What's wrong? What's wrong? What's wrong?*"

Sam Shivers **LOUDLY** blew his nose into his handkerchief.

Creepella stepped inside. "Mr. Shivers, we're looking for Blobbina."

At the mention of the monster's name, Shivers burst out crying. He buried his face on his desk.

"What a disaster!
What a tragedy!
What a calamity!

My directing career is over, done for, ruined!"

Then, very slowly and dramatically, he lifted his head and placed a paw on his forehead.

"I'll have to go work in my aunt's **earthworm** beauty salon!" he exclaimed.

Creepella did not like whiners. "Get ahold

of yourself!" she said sternly. "I'm sure things aren't as TERRIBLE as that. Tell me what happened."

The director sniffed noisily. "It's about BLOBBINA, my leading lady," he began. "She's . . . she's . . . she's . . ."

"She's *what*?" Creepella and Bitewing asked impatiently.

"SHE'S DISAPPEARED!"

Shivers shouted. Then he started to sob again.

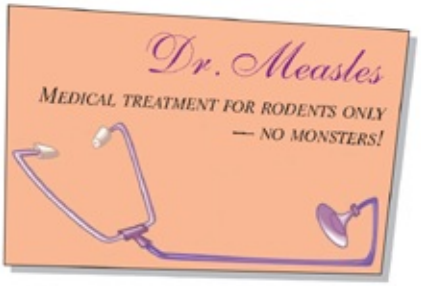
Creepella raised her left eyebrow. "I knew there was a mystery to solve," she said. "Luckily, I know just who can help us."

She took a stash of BUSINESS CARDS out of her pocket.

"Let's see now, here's one." She read the card. "PLUMBER RUSS T. SINK? No, that's not it."

She looked at another card. "MEDIEVAL PACKAGE DELIVERY? No, that's not it, either!"

She read a third card. "Dr. Measles? Probably not. He doesn't know a thing about monsters."



The director stared at Creepella. How could one mouse have **so many** business cards?

"AHHH! I've got it!" Creepella finally shrieked. "Here it is." She waved the card under the director's snout.

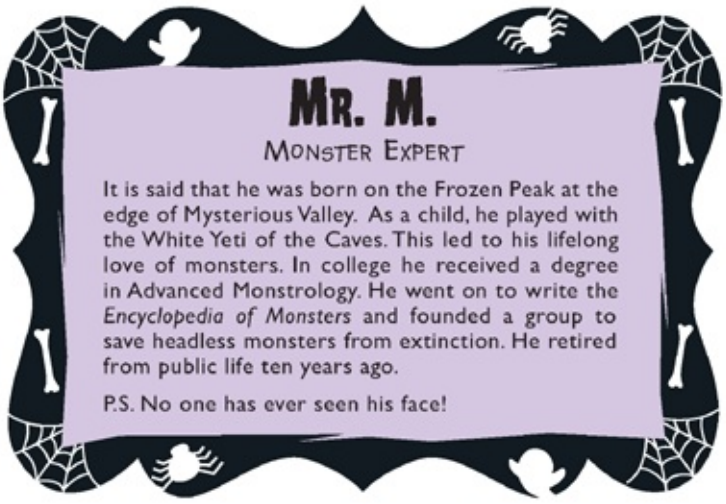
"Who is Mr. M.?" asked Sam Shivers. He sounded a little **suspicious**.

Bitewing flapped his wings furiously. "What do you mean, 'who is he?' He's the

most famouse expert on monsters in Mysterious Valley! BIG monsters, SMALL monsters, SMELLY monsters, SCARY monsters, SWEET monsters, SLIMY monsters — he knows them all!"

"He'll know how to help us," Creepella added. She quickly SCRIBBLED a message and gave it to Bitewing.

"Take this to Mr. M.!" she cried.


MR. M.
MONSTER EXPERT
It is said that he was born on the Frozen Peak at the edge of Mysterious Valley. As a child, he played with the White Yeti of the Caves. This led to his lifelong love of monsters. In college he received a degree in Advanced Monstrology. He went on to write the *Encyclopedia of Monsters* and founded a group to save headless monsters from extinction. He retired from public life ten years ago.
P.S. No one has ever seen his face!

A Dinner Invitation for Billy

While Creepella searched for Blobbina, Billy Squeakspeare, the famouse AUTHOR, was trying to take a nap in his bedroom at Squeakspeare Mansion. When he inherited the mansion, Billy learned he had to sleep during the day because the place was infested with 13 GHOSTS.

Every night at the stroke of midnight, the ghosts would start cleaning the house. This woke Billy up every time, and he could never get

back to sleep. But napping during the day wasn't always easy, either. For instance, today someone kept ringing and ringing the doorbell. Billy reluctantly **DRAGGED** himself out of bed. A loud voice was calling out from behind the door.

"Express letter for Mr. Squeakspeare!"

"Wh-who is it?" Billy asked in a sleepy voice. He still had his **nightcap** on his head.

"I'm the messenger from Rattenbaum Mansion," the visitor replied. "I'm looking for the famouse Mr. Billy Squeakspeare!"

Billy opened the door and found himself facing a **BIZARRE** rodent wearing a strange costume. A tall white wig was perched on his head. His red uniform was trimmed in gold, but it was covered in patches, and **MOTHS** were flying out of it.

"Are you the famouse Mr. Billy —" began the messenger.

Billy **CUT** him short. "Yes, yes, that's me, but —"

Before he could finish the sentence, the rodent gave him an old, **YELLOWED** envelope. Then he strutted away with his snout up in the air.

Puzzled, Billy turned the envelope in his hand. His great-great-great-uncle William,

the thirteenth GHOST in the mansion, appeared next to him.

"Nephew, is that envelope for me?" he asked.

"Actually, it's for me, from the Rattin-bottoms . . . or maybe the Rottendams . . . or the Rittanbams . . ." Billy replied.

William looked excited. "Do you mean the Rattenbaums? They're on my WEDDING list!"

"W-wedding?" Billy stammered. He was a very NERVOUS mouse. "Who's getting married?"

"You, of course!" William said in his booming voice. "I jotted down the names of all the single female rodents in Mysterious Valley. There are three in the Rattenbaum household!"

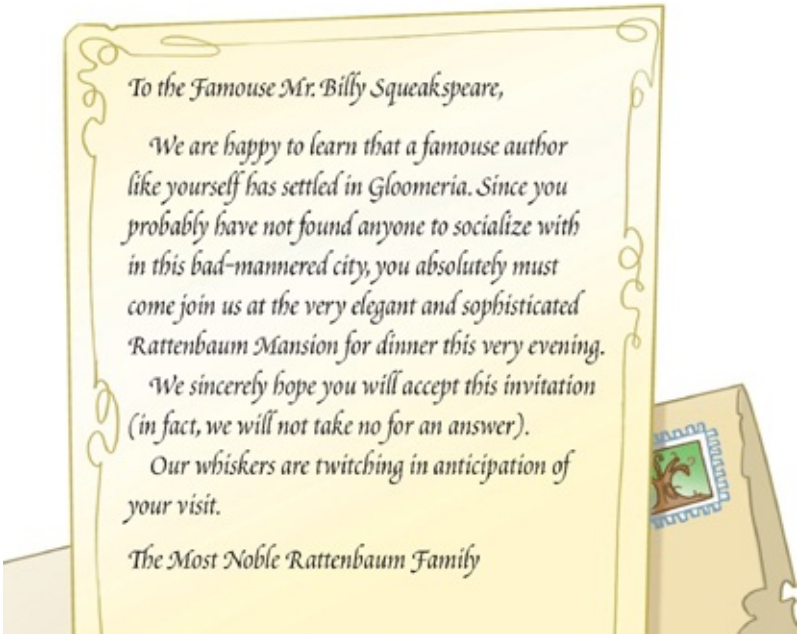
Billy looked TERRIFIED. "Wh-what are you

talking about? I'm too young to get married!"

"'Young'? You've already got COBWEBS on your face," said his great-great-great-uncle. "Now hurry up and open the envelope!"

With a sigh, Billy pulled out the letter.

"You know, I've heard that the Rattenbaum triplets are really delightful," William

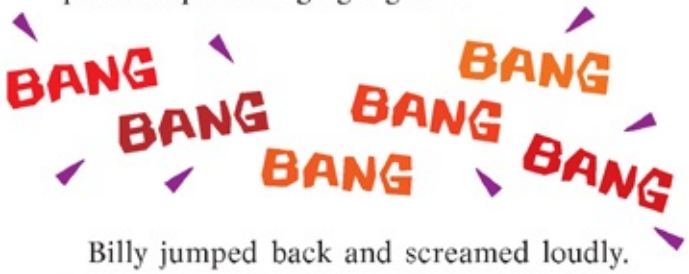

To the Famouse Mr. Billy Squeakspeare,
We are happy to learn that a famouse author like yourself has settled in Gloomeria. Since you probably have not found anyone to socialize with in this bad-mannered city, you absolutely must come join us at the very elegant and sophisticated Rattenbaum Mansion for dinner this very evening.
We sincerely hope you will accept this invitation (in fact, we will not take no for an answer).
Our whiskers are twitching in anticipation of your visit.
The Most Noble Rattenbaum Family

assured him. He slapped Billy on the back, but his ghostly paw went right through him. "It would make me so happy if you would settle down and **MARRY** a nice rodent. That way, you'll give me a little nephew who will grow up in this mansion."

Billy had no choice. There was no use **ARGUING** — his uncle would hound him about it for **DAYS**! So he put on his **BEST** suit and tie and got ready to meet the triplets.

Filthy Rich or Just Pretending?

Billy rang the BELL of the Rattenbaum Mansion. He expected to hear the sound of musical chimes. Instead, he heard an earsplitting clattering sound, like a bunch of pots and pans banging together.



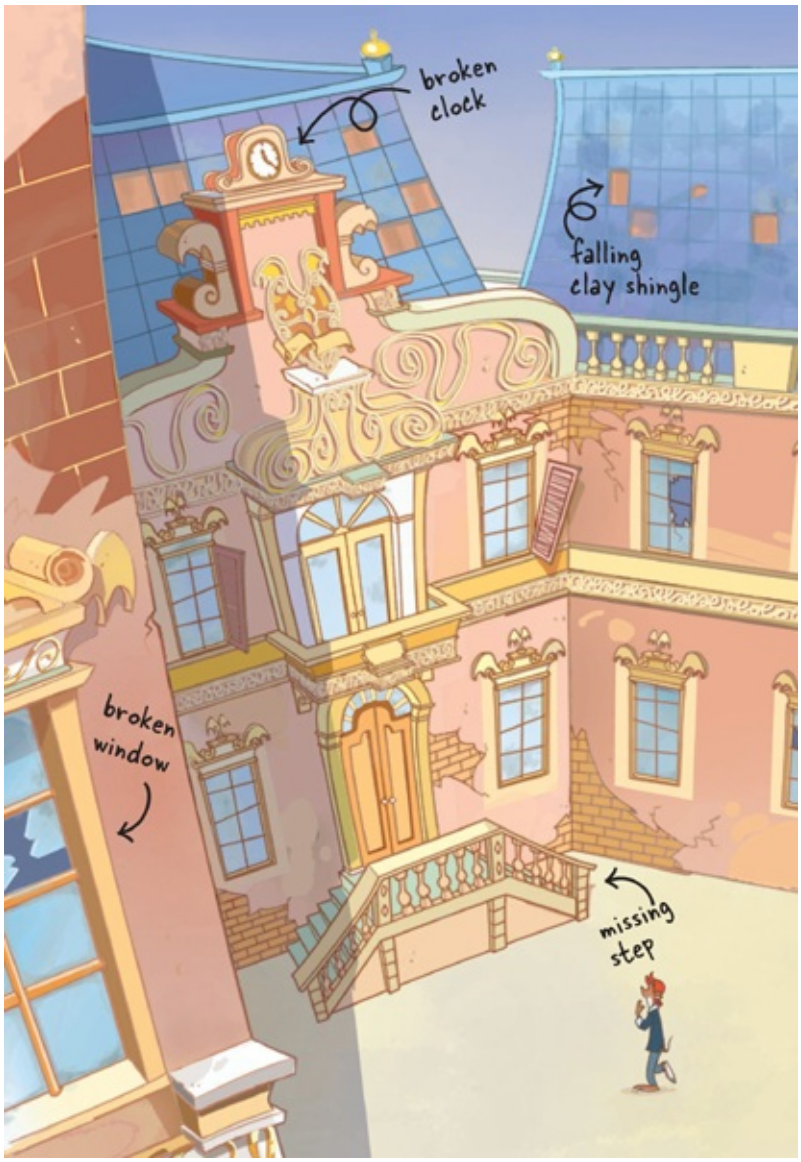
Billy jumped back and screamed loudly. Then he realized it was just the bell. Embarrassed, he looked around, hoping

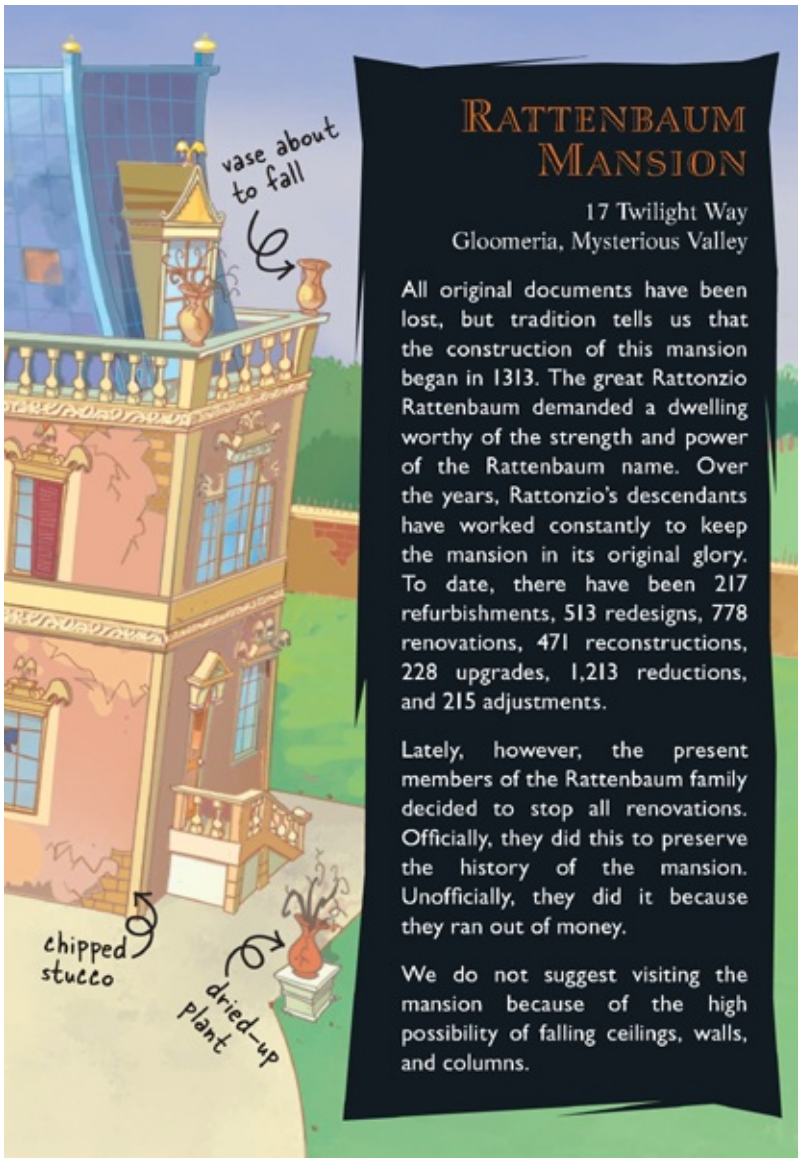
nobody had seen him acting like a scaredy-mouse.

The outside of the mansion was dark, SILENT, and empty. A few scraggly trees covered in GREEN mold stuck up here and there. THORNY bushes wrapped around the tree trunks. The decorative columns on top of the mansion's towers looked like they were going to collapse at any moment. Loose window shutters banged back and forth in the wind.

"I must have the wrong address," Billy muttered. "This house looks like it's been deserted for years!"

He was about to leave when he heard an eerie creak and the door slowly opened. Then a gray PAW reached through the doorway, grabbed him by the collar, and dragged him inside.


broken clock
falling clay shingle
broken window
missing step



Rattenbaum Mansion

17 Twilight Way
Gloomeria, Mysterious Valley

All original documents have been lost, but tradition tells us that the construction of this mansion began in 1313. The great Rattonzio Rattenbaum demanded a dwelling worthy of the strength and power of the Rattenbaum name. Over the years, Rattonzio's descendants have worked constantly to keep the mansion in its original glory. To date, there have been 217 refurbishments, 513 redesigns, 778 renovations, 471 reconstructions, 228 upgrades, 1,213 reductions, and 215 adjustments.

Lately, however, the present members of the Rattenbaum family decided to stop all renovations. Officially, they did this to preserve the history of the mansion. Unofficially, they did it because they ran out of money.

We do not suggest visiting the mansion because of the high possibility of falling ceilings, walls, and columns.

"Hurry up! Get in! You're letting in the COLD!" snapped the gray-furred rodent. Do you know how much heating costs these days?"

Billy found himself in a chilly and dark entrance hall, snout-to-snout with a bizarre-looking rodent. He wore a black suit that had once been ELEGANT, but was now covered with patches. A squashed top hat sat on his head.

"Good day, Master Bobby," the rodent said. "Welcome to our superluxurious mansion!"

"Actually, my name is Billy," the author corrected him.

The gray rodent ignored him. "I am Shamley Rattenbaum, lord of the mansion! And these are my wonderful, marvelous, enchanting granddaughters."

Three rodents in evening gowns emerged from the shadows.

"Hi, I'm Tilly!"

"Hi, I'm Milly!"

"Hi, I'm Lilly!"

Billy cleared his throat and politely introduced himself.

"Ahem. Pleased to meet you. I am —"

Tilly interrupted him. "We know who you are!"

"Of course we do!" added Milly.

"We know EVERYTHING about you!" said Lilly.

"Of course, you know my granddaughters are HIGH-SOCIETY rodents," Shamley bragged. "In fact, they couldn't be any more HIGH SOCIETY than they are now."

Then he leaned toward Billy. They were so close their whiskers were touching.

"How about you?" he asked. "Are you a DUKE? Maybe a COUNT?"

Billy didn't know what to say. The Rattenbaums seemed to be obsessed with royalty!

"Let me guess," said Shamley. "You're a prince, right? I can tell just by looking at you!"

"Yes! I see it in your UNCOMBED fur!" exclaimed Tilly.

"Yes! I see it in your CROOKED whiskers!" added Milly.

"Yes! I see it in your WRINKLY clothes!" concluded Lilly.

Shamley grabbed Billy by the collar again.

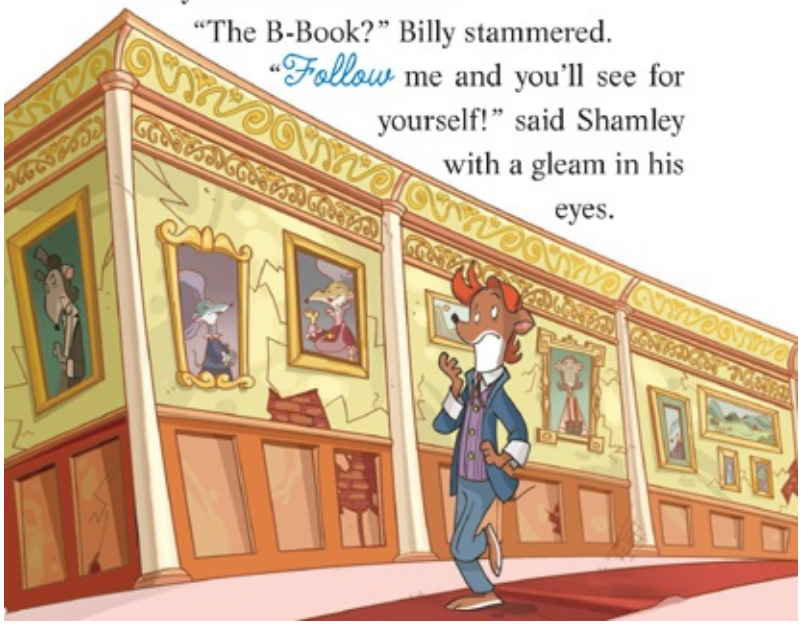
"Let's go! We can find your history upstairs."

The rodent pulled Billy down the dismal HALL. Dingy paintings of grouchy-looking rodents covered the walls.

"Here are the paintings of all of our HIGH-SOCIETY ancestors," Shamley said proudly. "We are the OLDEST family in the Valley. It's all in the Book."

"The B-Book?" Billy stammered.

"Follow me and you'll see for yourself!" said Shamley with a gleam in his eyes.



THE BOOK

Shamley stopped in front of a massive wooden **door** with a great big padlock on the knob. He searched his pockets and took out a **key**. Then he fiddled with the lock until the door opened.

Behind that door was another door secured with a **CHAIN** and another lock. He opened that door to reveal a third small door with thirteen **DEAD BOLTS**. He opened the locks one by one. Finally, he pulled open the door and Billy saw a room behind it.

"Come!" he told Billy. "It's time to consult the Book!"

The timid mouse cautiously followed

Shamley inside. The large room was filled with dusty objects that looked like they'd been around since the dawn of time. But the biggest item in the room was a truly **ENORMOUSE** book propped up on a stand.

Shamley climbed up a tall ladder, fixed his **EYEGLASSES** on the tip of his snout, and began to turn the huge pages.

"Let's see . . . Squeakino . . . Squeaksley . . . Squeakstail . . . Hmm. I can't seem to find you," he said.

Billy was puzzled. "What are you **LOOKING** for?"

"Your name, of course!" Shamley replied. "The Book has the names of all of the royal and high-society rodents in Mysterious Valley. It also has a family tree for each name. Every lord, lady, count, countess, duke, duchess, prince, and princess is in here."

Mechanical page-turner
Book stand

How to Live Like a High-Society Rodent
Map of the Rattenbaums' vacation property
Rattonzio Rattenbaum's (empty) trunk

"Why should my name be here?" Billy asked.

"It's obvious! Because you're a NOBLE. Otherwise, how could I let you marry one of my VERY NOBLE granddaughters?"

"What? 'Marry'?" Billy cried. "*Bouncing bookmarks!* I DON'T WANT TO GET MARRIED!"

Shamley pretended not to hear him. "Does your name have a C in it, by any chance?"

"Of course not!" Billy said.

"A Z ?" Shamley asked.

"Not that, either."

"How about a double X?" Shamley tried.

Billy sighed. "Not that, either!"

"Hmm. Let me take another look," Shamley told him.

No matter how hard he tried, Shamley could not find Billy's name in the Book. But that didn't bother him. He took a pencil

from his pocket. "I can just make a little addition here," he muttered to himself. He wrote a name in the Book.

Bobby Squeekspir

"Look! I found proof!" Shamley cried. "You're a noble! High society from the tip of your noble nose to the end of your noble tail."

He JUMPED down from the ladder and hugged Billy. *"Welcome to our family!"*

Billy tried to get out of Shamley's grasp.

"It's always a pleasure to greet a G-U-E-S-T like you," Shamley added.

Once again, Billy was puzzled. Why was Shamley spelling out words?

His host explained. "And by G-U-E-S-T I mean Give Us Excellent Support Today." Shamley cleared his throat. "As you can see, the magnificent design of this mansion is in need of some **REPAIR**."

"*Some* repair?" Billy asked. "This place is a **DISASTER** area!" Right above his head, a tile was about to fall from the ceiling.

At that moment, a nasal voice ECHOED ECHOED ECHOED throughout the mansion.

"The butler is happy to announce that DINNER is being served!"

The ENTIRE Rattenbaum family was seated around the rickety table in the dining room.

Lady Fifi, the triplets' grandmother, wore a dress that was the height of fashion — fifty years ago. Now it was covered in Patches. She walked over to Billy and held out her paw for a kiss.

"En-enchanted, my lady," Billy said, giving a CLUMSY bow.

"Finally!" she exclaimed. "It's been years since we've had a GENTLEMOUSE as a guest. Tonight, we are serving a very SPECIAL dinner in your honor."

Shamley nudged one of his granddaughters. "Milly, bring us the menu!"

"Grandfather, I'm Tilly!" she protested.

"Sorry, my little *cheesenip*," her grandfather said sweetly. "You are all so much alike."

Tilly handed Billy a **TATTERED** menu. "Here it is. It's the latest fashion in high society: **INVISIBLE** dinner!"

INVISIBLE DINNER
APPETIZERS
VERY LIGHT CRACKERS
(So light they blew away!)
CHEESE BALL MADE OF AIR
FIRST COURSE
SEAWEED SOUP FROM A SEA THAT DOESN'T EXIST
WITH MEMORIES OF PASTA FROM DAYS PAST
SECOND COURSE
FILET OF RARE FISH
(So rare we were not able to find it!)
WITH AROMAS OF FORGOTTEN CHEESE
DESSERT
FANTASY CAKE
(Fantasize your favorite flavor and then imagine eating it.)
BEVERAGES
AN ASSORTMENT OF INVISIBLE JUICES
THAT HAVE NO TASTE

The butler began to serve dinner. Billy noticed he was also the messenger from earlier that day. There was NOTHING on his serving tray, and the dishes remained EMPTY. But the Rattenbaums were excited about every serving.

"How delicious!" the rodents exclaimed each time.

"Dear Shamley, please pour me some more of that juice," said Lady Fifi. "It's so refreshing."

Shamley lifted the empty pitcher and pretended to pour something into his wife's glass. Billy was STUNNED. Who ever heard of an invisible dinner? But most of all, he was hungry!

Just then, his cell phone rang.

Riiiiiiiing Riiiiiiiing Riiiiiiiing

Billy was glad to have an excuse to leave the table. He quickly made his escape to another room.

"**Hello, Billy-Willy?**" asked the voice at the other end.

"Creepella? Is that you?" Billy asked.

"Of course it's me!" she replied. "Are you home? How are the 13 GHOSTS?"

"No, actually I'm . . ."

Creepella interrupted him. "It doesn't matter. I'm on a case and I need your help."

"A c-case?" Billy asked.

"Right!" she answered. "This case is very MYSTERIOUS. I asked the advice of a monster expert . . . but there's no time to talk. Meet me in front of Horrorwood Studios at the stroke of MIDNIGHT!"

"Th-the stroke of midnight?" That idea spooked Billy. But Creepella had already hung up.

The triplets caught up to him, SURROUNDING him.

"Bobby —" Tilly began.

"— who —" Milly continued

"— was that?" Lilly finished.

"That was my friend Creepella von Cacklefur," Billy replied. "Do you know her?"

The triplets began to SOB hysterically.

"Wh-what's wrong?" Billy asked.

"Don't mention that FLIRT!" Tilly said with a sigh.

"She's so UNPLEASANT!" Milly said with a sniff.

"And such a SHOW-OFF!" Lilly said with a sob.

Lady Fifi approached them. "Did I hear correctly, Count Bobby? Are you leaving us?"

Billy nodded. "Actually, I have another appointment. I have to go to the MOVIE STUDIOS."

"Then I hope you will bring the girls with you," said Lady Fifi.

"Yes!" the triplets cried happily.

Billy gave up. He left the mansion with the three girls. They made a quick stop at his house so he could change his clothes. Then they headed toward Horrorwood Studios.

A Mysterious Midnight Meeting

"*Shrieks and Monsters*, scene sixteen, take one!" Sam Shivers yelled. "**Action!**"

The director had decided to shoot a scene without Blobbina in it. He was hoping the star of his film would appear before long. If not, his movie would be RUINED!

Billy entered the studio with the Rattenbaum triplets. The girls ran to Shivers, bubbling over with excitement.

"We want —" Tilly began.

"— to be —" Milly continued.

"— in your movie!" Lilly finished.

The director raised an eyebrow.

"Hmm," he said. "I might have a small part for you as **extras**."

The girls squealed with delight. "We're going to be actors!"

"I want a **TRAILER** all to myself," said Tilly.

"A *golden* dressing room for me," said Milly.

"A team of **Makeup Artists** just for me," added Lilly.

Just then, the studio clock began to toll midnight. Billy left the triplets with Sam Shivers and went to find Creepella.

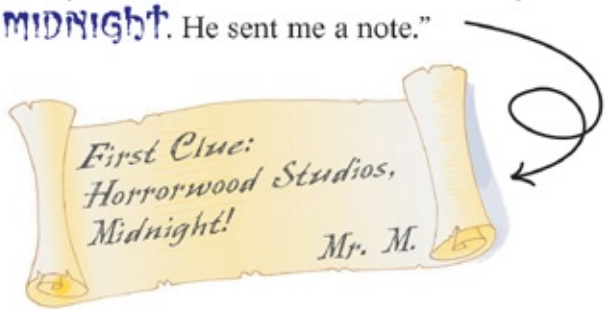
"Billy-Willy!" Creepella called out to him. "There you are. We must start the **INVESTIGATION** right away."

"What's going on?" Billy asked. "Why are we here so late?"

"Gorgo, our moat monster, is IN LOVE with Blobbina, Horrorwood's greatest star," Creepella explained quickly. "But she DISAPPEARED. And our monster expert—"

"M-monster expert?" Billy stammered.

"That's right," Creepella said. "Mr. M. is the greatest MONSTER expert in Mysterious Valley. He told me to be here exactly at MIDNIGHT. He sent me a note."



"What does this have to do with me?" Billy asked.

"I need a partner on this case," Creepella explained. **"Let's go!"**

The whole plan scared Billy. "Wh-where?"

Then he heard the gloomy sound of a funeral march. Creepella's cell phone was ringing.

"It's a message from Mr. M.!"

"Wh-what's Nightmare Park?" Billy asked nervously.

"It's a **FANTASTIC** place!" Creepella replied. "It's an old **amousement park** on the eastern wing of the studios. Nobody ever goes there anymore."

"So why should *we* go there?" Billy asked.

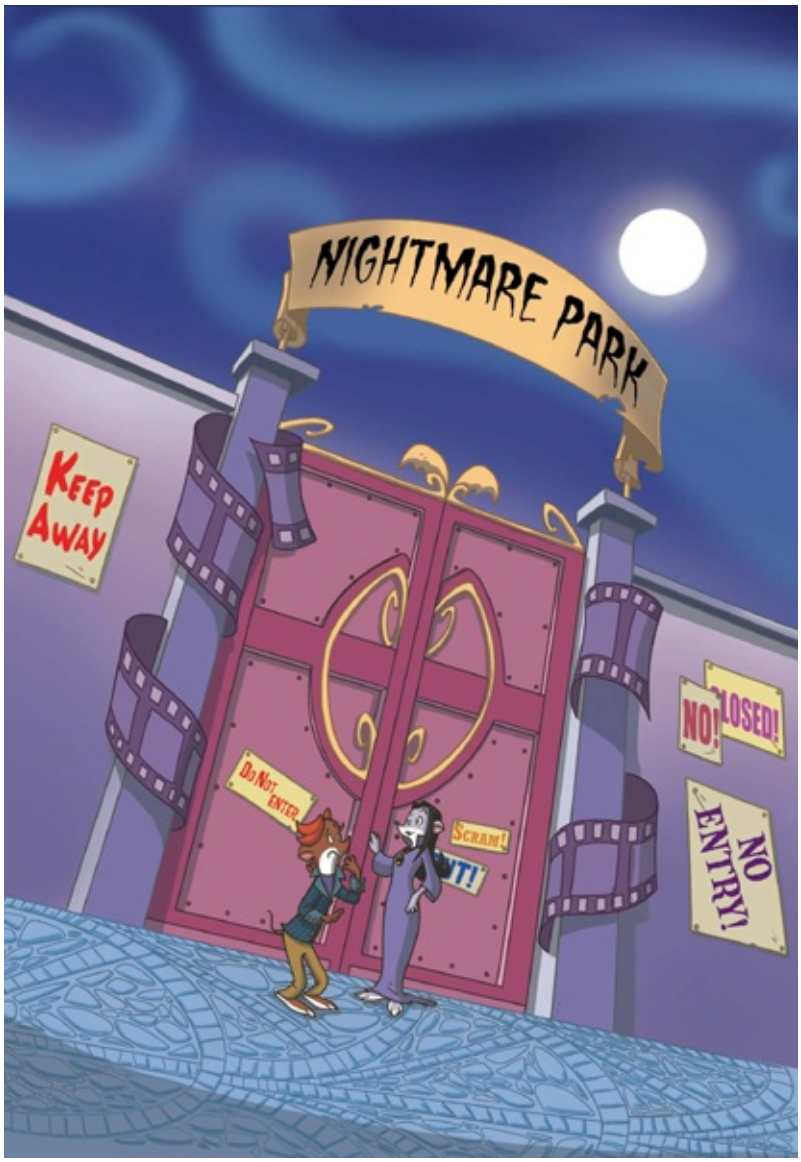
"To solve this **MYSTERY**!" she answered. She grabbed his arm and began to drag him toward the park.

They followed the path to the east wing of Horrorwood Studios. They soon found themselves facing the huge walls of <NIGHTMARE PARK>. They pushed open the massive METAL doors, which closed behind them with a loud clang.

They looked around and saw they were in a thick FOREST. The path in front of them forked in several directions.

Billy scratched his head. "Which way do we go now?" he asked as he LEANED against the nearest tree.

BADA BAM!


NIGHTMARE PARK
KEEP AWAY
NO! LOSED!
NO ENTRY!
DO NOT ENTER
SCRAM!

The tree crashed to the ground. Billy grabbed helplessly at the empty air, but then he, too, fell with a thud.

"Billy, you're so clumsy!" Creepella scolded. "You toppled a **prop**!"

Billy stood up, dazed. "Prop?"

"These aren't real trees," she said. "They're **PAINTED** panels!"

"**BOUNCING** bookmarks!" Billy exclaimed. He looked behind another tree. It was completely flat! "Is the entire forest **fake**?"

"The Dark Forest was one of the biggest attractions in Nightmare Park," Creepella explained. Then she pointed.

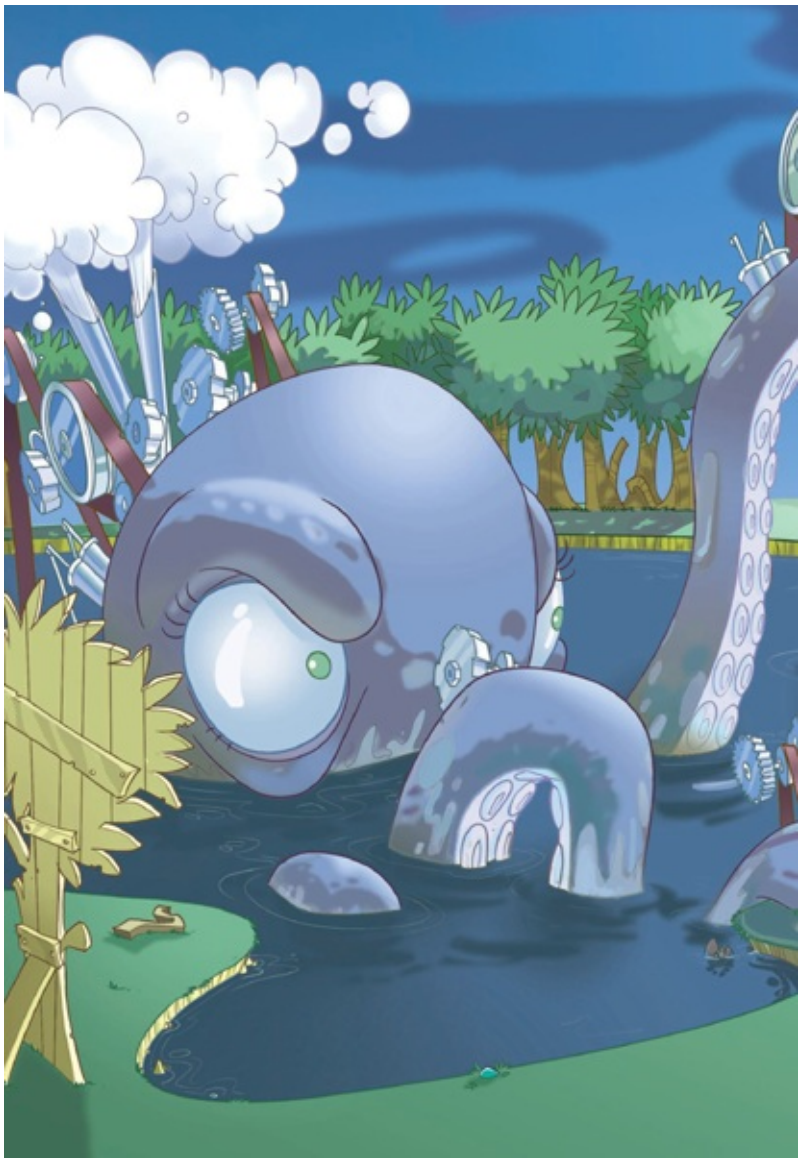
"And down there is the Black Lake! See? The water is as black as INK."

She inched closer to him. "They filmed the blockbuster *Tentacles, Tentacles* in that lake."

Frightened, Billy took a step backward. He tripped and his paw hit a BUTTON hidden between the rocks. The water in the lake began to boil and bubble. From the center of the lake, a MYSTERIOUS TENTACLE wriggled out like a giant snake. It slithered toward Billy and grabbed him by the ankle.

"Heeeeeeeellllllllllppppppppp!"

Billy cried. The monstrous tentacle dangled him UPSIDE DOWN over the lake and shook him to and fro. He opened his mouth to scream again, but he froze when he found himself staring at two large, EVIL-LOOKING green eyes.



Heeelp!

"Billy, please don't waste time playing with the GIANT octopus," Creepella scolded. "We've got a mystery to solve!"

"Heeelp meeee!"

Billy screamed.

Creepella chuckled. "I'll turn it off," she said. She walked around the lake to the panel that controlled the robot octopus. She pressed the first button she saw. The octopus's tentacles began to wave faster and faster!

"I'm getting seasick!" Billy cried.

"Whoops! I'll try this one," Creepella said, pressing another BUTTON.

The octopus stopped for a moment. Then it started to tickle Billy with the tips of its tentacles. Billy couldn't stop laughing.

"Ha ha ha! Hee hee hee! Ho ho ho!"

Creepella placed her hands on her hips. "This is nothing to laugh about, Billy! We're wasting precious time!"

She impatiently pressed the third BUTTON on the panel. The octopus finally stopped moving and let go of Billy.

Splash!

Billy swam back to the shore as fast as his arms could get him there.

"Why, oh why, didn't I stay home?" he wailed.

Creepella stomped away from the lake. "I can't always wait for you, Billy!" she called behind her.

"Wait!" he shouted, wringing out his SOGGY clothes. "Don't leave me here alone!"

He tried to catch up to her, but he tripped on something and landed once again with his snout in the GRASS.

"Let's try that trail," Creepella said, pointing to a narrow GRAVEL path. "What do you think, Billy? Billy? Where did you go?"

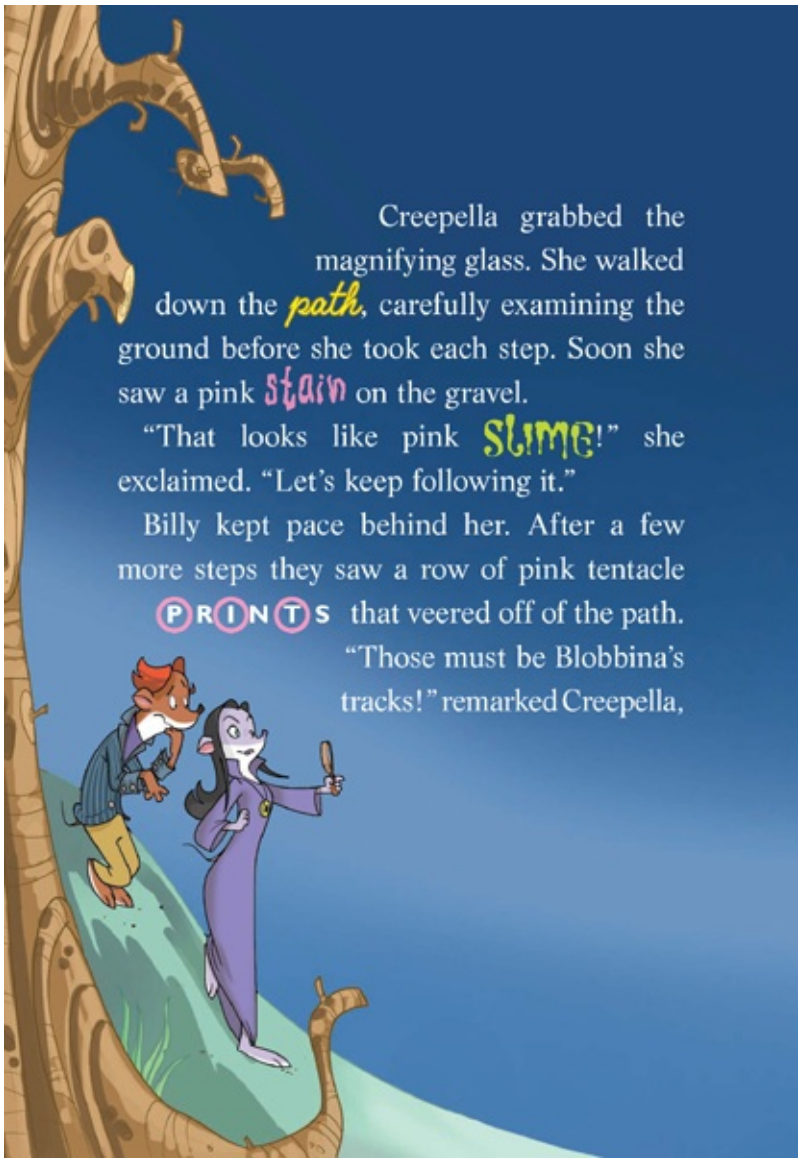
"UMPF BFRT!"

Billy replied through a mouthful of grass.

"I can't believe it! You fell again?" Creepella asked.

"Yes, but . . . pffft!" Billy spit out a clover. "I tripped on a magnifying glass. People will leave anything lying around, won't they?"

"Let me see that!" Creepella bent down. "There's a NOTE from Mr. M. here!"



Creepella grabbed the magnifying glass. She walked down the *path*, carefully examining the ground before she took each step. Soon she saw a pink **stain** on the gravel.

"That looks like pink **SLIME**!" she exclaimed. "Let's keep following it."

Billy kept pace behind her. After a few more steps they saw a row of pink tentacle **PRINTS** that veered off of the path.

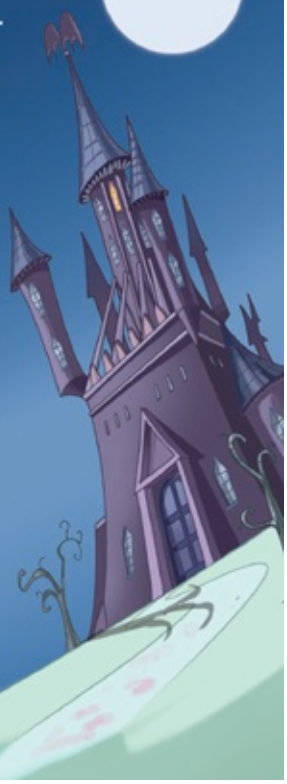
"Those must be Blobbina's tracks!" remarked Creepella,

pleased with the discovery.

They followed the tracks down a new path. Billy saw nothing but darkness ahead. Then he made out the shadow of a GLOOMY castle. A feeble light shone from the castle's highest tower.

"L-let's go home," Billy said, his teeth chattering from fright.

But Creepella was already running ahead.



She stopped in front of a large drawbridge that looked very unsteady. The moat below was so deep and murky that she couldn't see the bottom. Here and there, yellow **SLANTED EYES** peeked out of the dark water. Then the sound of chomping **TEETH** filled the night air.

Billy caught up to her. "Wh-what is that?" he asked.

"crocodiles, I think," Creepella replied calmly. She crossed the bridge, and Billy followed her, his tail *twitching* with fear.

They entered the castle. The only light inside came from the full moon shining through the windows.

"I saw a light up in the tower," Creepella said. "Let's go there!"

A long and narrow staircase led to the top.

Creepella took the steps two at a time. Billy SCRAMBLED to keep up with her, breathing heavily. Through the small windows in the tower wall he could see the forest down below.

"L-looks like we're going up very high," he said nervously. "I think we should s-stop here."

"You aren't afraid of HEIGHTS, are you, Billy-Willy?" Creepella asked. "Wait until I take you to the top of Bitewing's tower in Cacklefur Castle. The view there will take your breath away!"

"Actually . . . *puff* . . . *pant* . . . I'm already out of breath!" Billy pointed out.

They CLIMBED . . . and CLIMBED . . . and CLIMBED. Finally, they reached the room in the top of the tower. It was a small room with stone walls.

"Wh-what's that in the middle of the room?" Billy asked. "It looks like a casket!"

"In fact, it's a CASKET made of crystal," Creepella said. "Let's take a look!"

Billy looked at the see-through walls of the casket and jumped back. Two huge eyes with long EYELASHES were staring at him!

Creepella wasn't afraid. She lifted the lid of the casket and a pink GELATINOUS monster slithered out.

"BLOBBINA!" Creepella cried. "It's you!"

Billy was confused. "This is B-Blobbina? I thought we were looking for a movie star, not a monster!"

"She is a MOVIE STAR — the most MONSTROUS star in the Valley, and we've finally found her!" Creepella exclaimed happily.

A-a casket?
D-don't open it!
Blobbina!
This is a movie star?

Billy stepped back from the pink slime on the floor, a look of **DISGUST** on his face. But Creepella thought Blobbina was beautiful. She talked to the monster in her own language.

"Bluuuup! Blu blu blu bluuuuuurp!"

gurgled Blobbina.

"Blurp?" asked Creepella

"Blup!" answered the monster.

Billy was **astonished**. "Do you really understand her?" he asked.

"**OF COURSE!**" Creepella replied.

"Monsterian is taught to all the children in Gloomeria at a very early age. It's tradition!"

Blobbina let out a heart-wrenching moan.

"Oh, poor thing!" Creepella exclaimed. "She told me she was KIDNAPPED by the evil Dr. Inkubus."

"D-Doctor who?" Billy stammered.

"He is the old caretaker of Nightmare Park," Creepella explained. "It used to be the star attraction of Horrorwood Studios. Oh, I remember the time I rode the marvelous

But the park shut down right after that."

"I'm not surprised," Billy sniffed. "It really seems like a HORRIBLE place!"

DOCTOR INKUBUS

WHO HE IS: An expert in creating nightmares, shivers, goose bumps, and screams of fright.

WHERE HE LIVES: Since the park closed, he hides in a dark and secret corner of Horrorwood Studios. It is said he only comes out at night.

EDUCATION: He has a degree from Shivery Arts Academy. He majored in Screams, Shrieks, and Screeches.

HOBBY: He collects recordings of the most bloodcurdling screams in horror films.

HIS DREAM: To bring Nightmare Park back to its original splendor, with the same hair-raising attractions it had years ago.

"On the contrary, the horribleness of the place was a big draw," Creepella said. "But after a few years, people stopped getting scared. So the park was abandoned."

Blobbina interrupted her.

"Bluppp blurrpt blu blub!"

"She said Dr. Inkubus dreams of reopening the park," Creepella translated.

"Blup bluup blu!"

"And he wants to force Blobbina to be the main attraction!" Creepella finished.

"Blup!" moaned Blobbina. A pink TEAR ran down her cheek.

"Poor thing," Creepella said. "She belongs on the big screen, not IMPRISONED in an amousement park! We need to get her out of here!"

Creepella quickly dialed Cacklefur Castle on her cell phone.

"Boneham! There's an EMERGENCY!" she said. "Hurry to NIGHTMARE PARK'S entrance. And bring the sidecar. You know, the one we use to bring Gorgo to the SWAMP."

She ended the call and turned to Billy. "We have to get out of here! You go first, Blobbina will follow you, and I'll bring up the rear."

"Where do you think you're going?"

Creepella turned and saw the SKELETAL shadow of Dr. Inkubus behind them.

"HE'S ONTO US!" she cried.

Blobbina slithered faster and bumped into Billy. The two of them rolled down the stairs together in a blur of PINK SLIME. Only Billy's head and paws peeked out from the gelatinous goo.

Where do you think you're going?
Hurry!

Creepella ran after them.

"**HURRY!**" she yelled.

She gave the ball of slime a big shove, sending Blobbina and Billy tumbling out of the castle and **sliding** down the path. Dr. Inkubus chased them, shouting, "Get back here! **That monster is miiiiiiiiiiine!**"

But he didn't get far. **BAM!** He slipped on a **BLOB** of pink slime and ended up flat on his back with his paws in the air.

The strange trio arrived at the park entrance to find Boneham on a motorcycle, honking the horn **loudly**. Creepella pushed the pink monster into the sidecar and jumped on the seat. Billy was still stuck inside the glob of pink GOO!

"Step on it!" Creepella yelled. "To Cacklefur Castle!"

Wedding Bells at Cacklefur Castle

The sun was rising over the HORIZON, brightening the sky over Mysterious Valley when Boneham's motorcycle stopped in front of Cacklefur Castle. He honked the horn several times, and the von Cacklefur family all came outside.

"Welcome back, Creepella!"

Bitewing cried. He pointed his wings toward Blobbina. "What is that Weird creature?"

"It's Blobbina! We found her!" Creepella told everyone. "She was kidnapped by Dr. Inkubus."

"How unusual," said Boris von Cacklefur.

"Blobbina has a rodent's whiskers and a tail."

"Oh, that's just silly Billy Squeakspeare," Creepella explained. "Blobbina fell on him and he got trapped."

"BLECH!" shrieked Billy, as he set himself free from the slimy pink monster.

Then the moat began to BUBBLE. Two surprised love-struck eyes stared out of the mud at Blobbina.

It was Gorgo.

"BLUVK!" gurgled Gorgo happily when he saw Blobbina.

"Bliiip!" Blobbina answered, batting her eyelashes.

Grandma Crypt sighed loudly and held her hands over her heart.

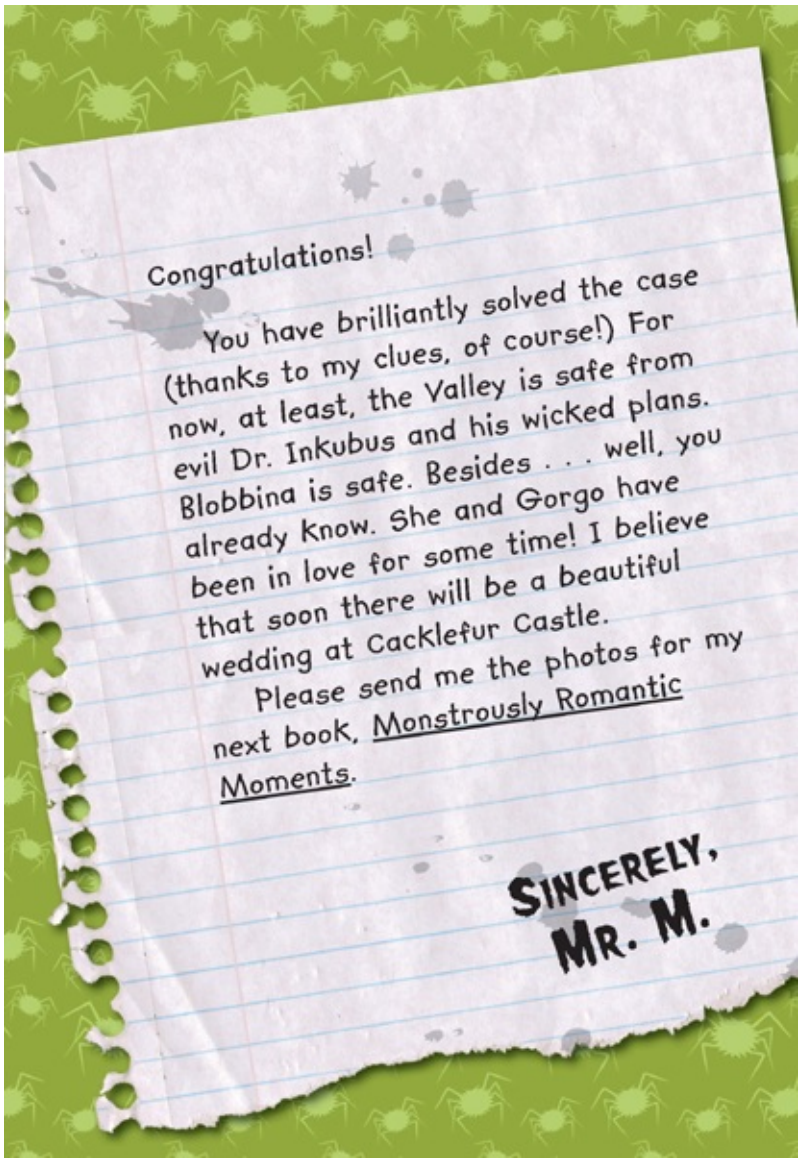
"Ah, love..."

Boris nodded. "The two of them are made for each other. Just look at them!"

Shivereen ran to Creepella, holding a piece of paper. "Auntie, this just arrived! It's from Mr. M."

Billy took a STEP BACKWARD. "W-well, it's time for me to go," he said. But a 🐾🐾🐾 grabbed him by the sleeve.

"No, no, my Billy-Willy," said Creepella. "You can't leave now. You have to stay here for the rehearsal!"


Congratulations!
You have brilliantly solved the case (thanks to my clues, of course!) For now, at least, the Valley is safe from evil Dr. Inkubus and his wicked plans. Blobbina is safe. Besides . . . well, you already know. She and Gorgo have been in love for some time! I believe that soon there will be a beautiful wedding at Cacklefur Castle.
Please send me the photos for my next book, Monstrously Romantic Moments.
SINCERELY,
MR. M.

Hoooooray!
Hooray for the happy couple!
Ah, love!

"R-rehearsal?" Billy stammered.

"Yes, the wedding rehearsal," Creepella said. "You can be Gorgo's BEST MAN, and I'll be Blobbina's maid of honor!"

Billy fainted on the spot, but the ring of his cell phone quickly woke him up. The Rattenbaum triplets had left him a message.

"Bobby, where are you?" they whined. "We got you a part in the movie. You have to lower yourself by the thread of a Spider's Web into the Bottomless Well! Aren't you happy?"

Billy fainted again. Meanwhile, Grandpa Frankenstein brought a pail filled with old, rusted screws to the moat.

"Our GORGO seems happy now," he said. "But let's test just to make sure."

He threw the pail of rusty screws into the moat. Gorgo gobbled up every last one. He

ate everything but the handle, which was too clean and new for him. He spit it out — and it hit Billy right in the face! The poor writer, who was just beginning to come to, **fainted** for the third time.

"**Gorgo is better!**"

Creepella cheered. "It's a happy ending to a scary story — the perfect story to send to my friend *Geronimo Stilton*!"

THE END

THE NEWEST SENSATION IN HORROR!

After I finished reading Creepella's book, Bitewing chuckled.

"Good story, right? So, did you figure out who's getting **married?**" the bat asked me.

"Of course," I answered. "The two **MONSTERS** of Mysterious Valley: Gorgo and Blobbina!"

"Exactly!" the bat snickered. "That's why I brought you this tombstone-shaped **WEDDING** invitation. You're invited! Are you ready to go?"

"Hmm . . . a wedding between monsters?"

I said with a shiver. "Brrr! My whiskers are curling from fright!"

Bitewing fluttered around my head. "No excuses! The trip is already booked. But before you go, you have to publish this **BOOK** . . . ***PRONTO!*** In fact, Creepella's already working on her next one."

I couldn't argue with the bat. It's clear to me that Mysterious Valley is home to a truly fabumouse author of **SCARY STORIES** . . .

CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR!

If you liked this book, be sure to check out my next adventure!

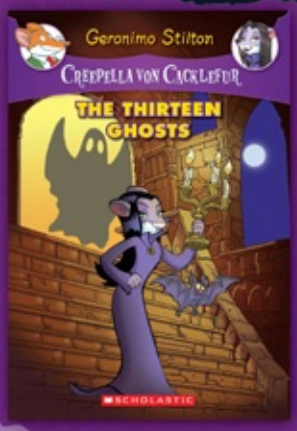
GHOST PIRATE TREASURE

Oh, no! Billy Squeakspeare has a big problem, and he needs Creepella's help. Someone's been digging holes around Squeakspeare Mansion at night, and Billy wants to find out who it is. The dangerous, legendary pirate Morgan Darkwhisker is said to have buried his long-lost treasure near Squeakspeare Mansion years ago—could he be hunting for his hidden riches? It's up to Billy and Creepella to find the treasure first!

Meet

CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**. **YIKES!** I'm a real **'fraidy** mouse, but even I think **CREEPELLA** and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about **CREEPELLA** in these **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **spectacularly spooky** tales!



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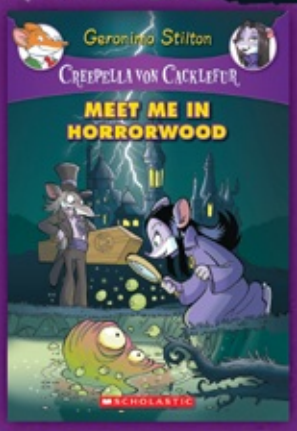

#2 MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD

1
2
3
4
5
6
1. Mountains of the Mangy Yeti
2. Cacklefur Castle
3. Angry Walnut Tree
4. Rattenbaum Palace
5. Rancidrat River
6. Bridge of Shaky Steps
7. Squeakspeare Mansion
8. Slimy Swamp
9. Ogre Highway
10. Gloomeria
11. Shivery Arts Academy
12. Horrorwood Studios

MYSTERIOUS VALLEY
8
9
7
10
HORRORWOOD
12
11

19
18
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17
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11
6
15
14
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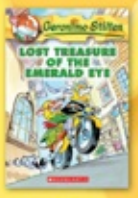
12
2

CACKLEFUR CASTLE

1. Oozing moat
2. Drawbridge
3. Grand entrance
4. Moldy basement
5. Patio, with a view of the moat
6. Dusty library
7. Room for unwanted guests
8. Mummy room
9. Watchtower
10. Creaking staircase
11. Banquet room
12. Garage (for antique hearses)
13. Bewitched tower
14. Garden of carnivorous plants
15. Stinky kitchen
16. Crocodile pool and piranha tank
17. Creepella's room
18. Tower of musky tarantulas
19. Bitewing's tower (with antique contraptions)

Don't miss any of my other fabumouse adventures!



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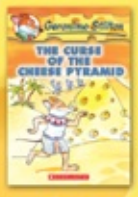


#2 The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid

#3 Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House

#4 I'm Too Fond of My Fur!

#5 Four Mice Deep in the Jungle

#6 Paws Off, Cheddarface!

#7 Red Pizzas for a Blue Count

#8 Attack of the Bandit Cats

#9 A Fabumouse Vacation for Geronimo

#10 All Because of a Cup of Coffee

#11 It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse!

#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!

#13 The Phantom of the Subway

#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire

#15 The Mona Mousa Code

#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper

#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!

#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands

#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton

#20 Surf's Up, Geronimo!

#21 The Wild, Wild West

#22 The Secret of Cacklefur Castle

A Christmas Tale

#23 Valentine's Day Disaster

#24 Field Trip to Niagara Falls

#25 The Search for Sunken Treasure

#26 The Mummy with No Name

#27 The Christmas Toy Factory

#28 Wedding Crasher

#29 Down and Out Down Under

#30 The Mouse Island Marathon

#31 The Mysterious Cheese Thief

Christmas Catastrophe

#32 Valley of the Giant Skeletons

#33 Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery

#34 Geronimo Stilton, Secret Agent

#35 A Very Merry Christmas

#36 Geronimo's Valentine

#37 The Race Across America

#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure

#39 Singing Sensation

#40 The Karate Mouse

#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro

#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief

#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!

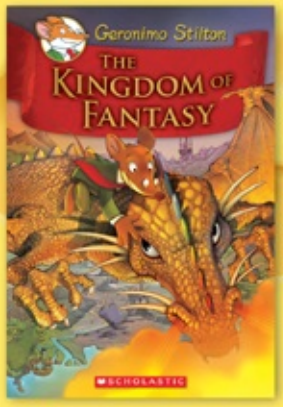
#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery

#45 Save the White Whale!

#46 The Haunted Castle

#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!

Don't miss these very special editions!



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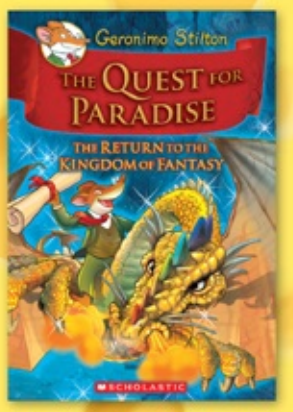

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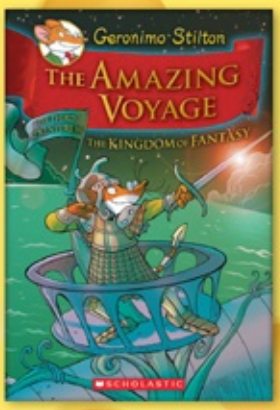

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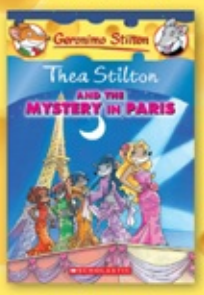

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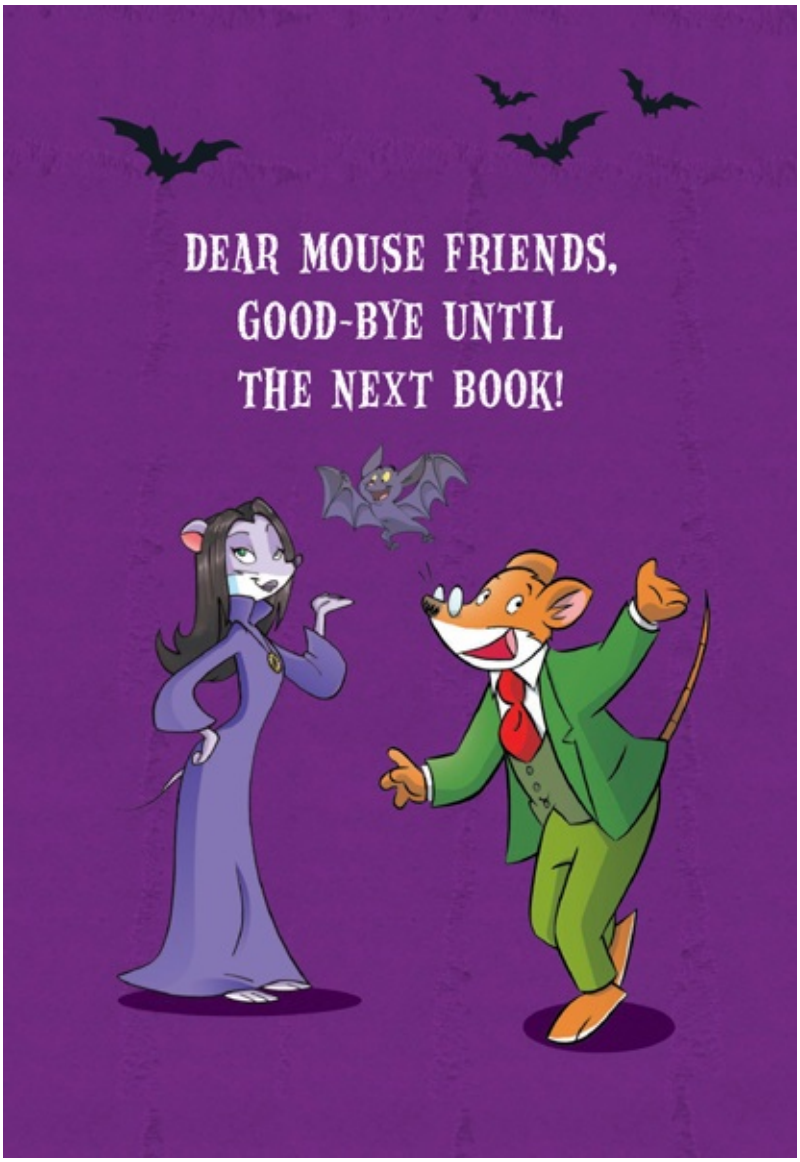
DEAR MOUSE FRIENDS,
GOOD-BYE UNTIL
THE NEXT BOOK!

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